CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

State Museum Lucknow Library

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

To Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen.

MADAM.

When a remorselessly treacherous and rebellious foe sought to uproot the British Power in India, and by acts of deliberately-planned ferocity and fiendish cruelty strove to destroy every European and Christian in the land, the devoted heroism of a small but resolute force, who fought to maintain the rights of their Sovereign and the honour of England, was so far crowned with success as to stay the arm of the destroyer, wrenching from his grasp the stronghold of rebellion, and winning for them not only victory in the crime-stained streets of Delhi, but the proud satisfaction of Your Majesty's gracious approval and heart-felt sympathy.

Though opposed to all but overpowering numbers, in long-continued, close, and deadly conflict, amidst scorching heat and withering pestilence, by night and day, that band of heroes, when the fate of India vibrated in the balance, would not suffer a thought of any other result than, under the blessing of Almighty God, a victorious one, that should re-establish the sway of Your Majesty's sceptre in the most splendid province of the Empire.

Undeterred by the protracted hardships of the siege, assault, and capture of Delhi, the glorious victors hastened to the rescue of their beleaguered countrymen and their families in Oude, gathering fresh laurels on the way, and taking share in the rescue of the suffering but heroic garrison of Lucknow.

The following Sketches, imperfect as they are, which, by permission graciously accorded, I respectfully dedicate to Your Majesty, will perhaps afford a faint idea of some of the scenes which that gallant force went through in honour of their country and for love of their Queen.

I am,

MADAM,

With the most profound respect,

Your Majesty's most faithful and devoted
Subject and Servant,

GEORGE FRANCKLIN ATKINSON,

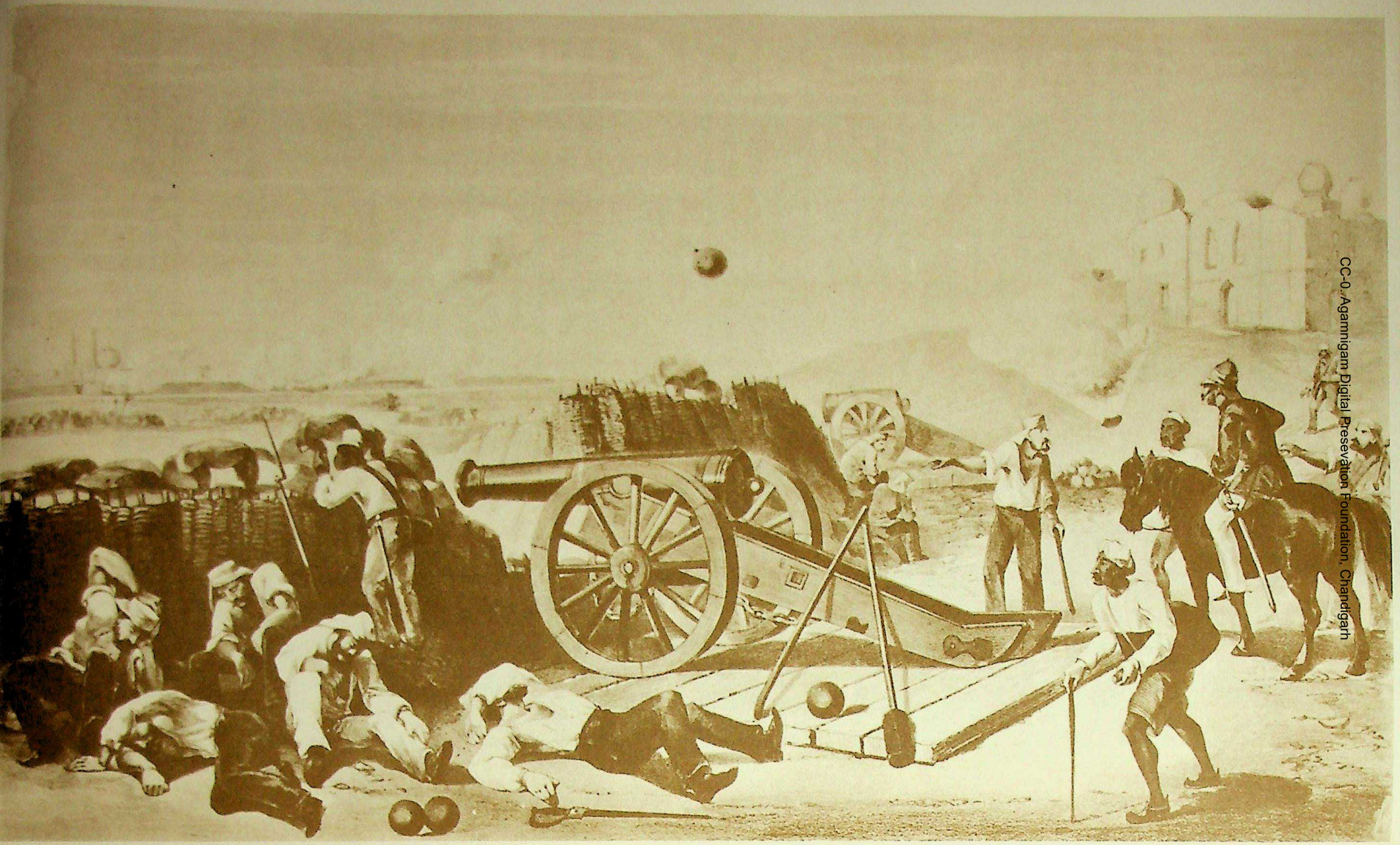
Captain, Bengal Engineers.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

15. HEAVY DAY IN THE BATTERIES.

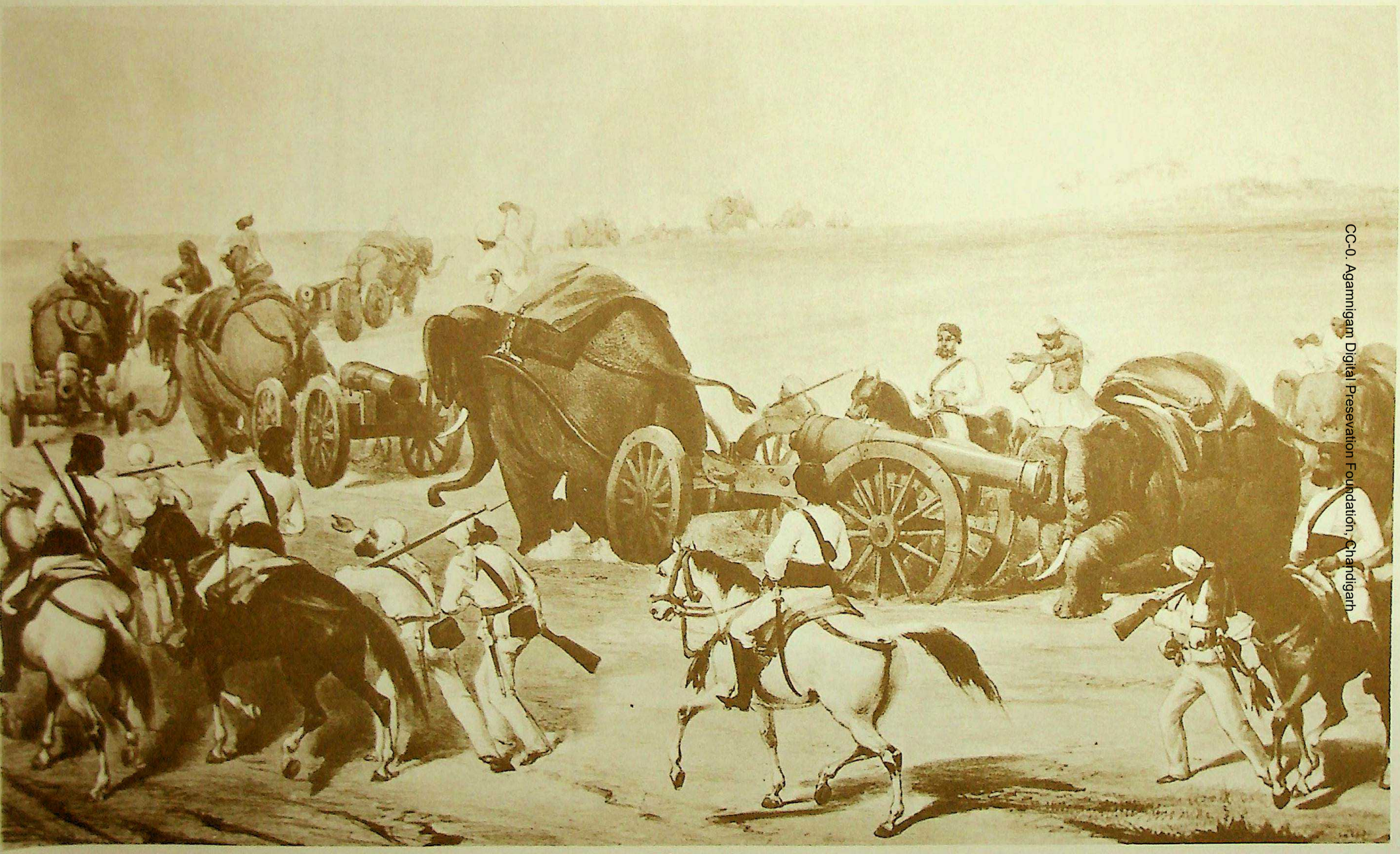
When the British force first took possession of the heights in the immediate vicinity of Delhi, batteries were at once erected for the few heavy guns that had been brought with the force from Umballa, and those taken from the enemy at the Hindun and at Badle-Serai. These batteries were erected at various points along the ridge, at a range varying from 1,500 to 2,000 yards from the walls. The one in the Sketch represents a portion of one near an old mosque, which was situated about the centre of the ridge, midway between the Flagstaff Battery and Hindoo Rao's. The efforts of the enemy were principally directed against the batteries nearer Hindoo Rao's, which were more accessible; but the position, even at the Mosque Battery, was far from enviable, as the practice of the enemy was wonderfully accurate, even at that long range, and two of our howitzers were soon dismounted by them. The gunners of the British force were so few, that the duty imposed on them rendered it quite impossible for our guns to cope successfully against those of the rebels, whose artillery was of far heavier calibre, and who had an inexhaustible supply of ammunition, and men in abundance to work the guns. With superiority of fire, coupled with unceasing attacks on the British camp and batteries, to harass and exhaust the few troops that defended them, was the object the rebels had in view; and this was, perhaps, never more closely on the eve of being successfully accomplished than on the eventful anniversary of Plassey, when the whole strength of the garrison was put forth to overwhelm the British troops, already well-nigh exhausted with incessant fighting and exposure. From daybreak till sunset was one continued conflict under a burning sun: skirmishing and hand-to-hand encounters took place along the whole right of the camp for hours consecutively. But the story can best be told in the words of a distinguished officer, who played a very conspicuous part on that, as, indeed, on every day, from the action of Badle-Serai until a desperate wound, six weeks later, compelled him for a time to cease from taking any share in the operations. He wrote:—"All our troops had now been engaged, and the greater part had fallen back exhausted. The General then directed me to the Mosque Battery, where applications were being constantly sent for reinforcements: I sent every available man. I was then directed to assume command at Hindoo Rao's: when I arrived there, I found every one exhausted and done up: there were the 1st Fusiliers and some Rifles, all done up. I went on to the new advanced battery,—it was crowded with worn-out men; the artillerymen, likewise done up, had ceased firing: another party of Rifles, in a similar state, in another position: 120 men of the 2nd Fusiliers, who had marched twenty-three miles that morning, and had had no breakfast, were lying down exhausted; three weak companies of Goorkhas were out as skirmishers; but they, too, were exhausted, and the remainder were resting under a rock. The heat was terrific, and the thermometer must have been at least 140°, with a hot wind blowing, and a frightful glare. Well, the mutineers all this time, from behind walls and rocks, were keeping up a brisk fire all along our front, *i.e.* to the right of Hindoo Rao's house, as far as Subzee Mundee, and a battery of two guns from Kissengunj was firing upon us without having it returned. I ordered up, when at Hindoo Rao's, 100 of the 1st Fusiliers: after serving out grog to them, I threw them forward to the left front of the new battery. I got a reinforcement of 200 of Rothney's Sikhs, who also had marched twenty-three miles, and had as yet nothing to eat; and shortly afterwards a small party of 30 of the 2nd Fusiliers, and another under the Sergeant-Major. The latter was sent with the 1st Fusiliers: they beat back the mutineers at once, and took possession of a temple on the left front of the batteries, and which commanded it. On the right I threw forward Rothney's Sikhs, some Guides, and a few of the 2nd Fusiliers: they advanced, and again took possession of Subzee Mundee. Between this and the batteries our skirmishers now had command of the whole ground; we were now masters of the field,—the mutineers were completely beaten; and when they found I intended to hold my position, they fell back upon the town. Our loss was considerable,—160 killed and wounded; but that of the enemy was very severe. We suffered greatly from the sun: the 1st Fusiliers alone had five officers out of ten struck down by *coup de soleil*."

Such is a specimen of the kind of work that the British had to undergo from the 8th of June to the 13th of September; and small as was the force for the first six weeks,—numbering about 7,000 men of all arms,—the casualties during that time were 22 officers and 296 men killed, and 72 officers and 990 men wounded.



CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Preservation Foundation, Chandigarh

Plate 15



CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

Plate 19

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Preservation Foundation, Chandigarh

Plate 15

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

Plate 19

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

19.—ADVANCE OF THE SIEGE TRAIN.

This Sketch represents the advance of the siege-train that was despatched to Delhi for the purpose of demolishing the fortifications, which, it was found, could not possibly be effected by means of the few heavy guns that originally accompanied the force on its first breaking ground before Delhi.

Anticipating but a trifling resistance, if any, on the part of the rebels, a very few guns were brought from Umballa: these, on the first outbreak of the mutiny, were in the magazine at the Fort of Phillour, under the charge of a Sepoy regiment; and it was feared that there would be difficulty in obtaining possession of them; but in consequence of a rapid night march of a wing of H.M.'s 8th Foot from the neighbouring station at Loodianah, the regiment was surprised, and the arsenal secured. An artillery officer was immediately despatched from Simla by the Commander-in-Chief to bring a third-class siege-train to Umballa, which was accordingly done, by dint of the greatest exertion, and was effected not one moment before it was necessary; as, immediately after the last gun had crossed the bridge of boats that spanned the then narrow stream of one of the Five Rivers, the water rose, in consequence of the melting of the snows in the Himalayahs, and carried away the bridge. These guns were drawn by bullocks, from eighteen to twenty-four being yoked to each piece.

When it was found that this small train was ineffective to demolish the enemy's works, and that the pieces suffered so much from the accurate practice of the rebel artillery, who dismounted several, even at a range of 1,700 yards, and that the guns were, moreover, injured by the incessant firing, a new siege-train was ordered to be sent from the arsenal of Ferozepore. This magazine being at a distance of nearly 200 miles from Delhi, created considerable delay in the taking of the city; for nothing could be done but for our troops to maintain themselves in their position until its arrival, which was not until the 7th of September; by which time the batteries had been duly prepared for their reception.

The guns of this train were drawn by elephants, as shown in the Drawing,—a single elephant attached to each: but at times, when the road was deep in sand, the assistance of a second elephant had to be brought into requisition: and, with a pad to protect his forehead, he would push the wheels, lowering himself on his knees, and showing wonderful sagacity in adopting the best mode of extricating the ponderous mass from its difficulties. The train consisted of nearly fifty pieces of heavy ordnance; and these, together with the innumerable carts of ammunition, extended over about seven miles of road, and were protected by British infantry, new Sikh levies, and some irregular cavalry.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Preservation Foundation, Chandigarh

This Sketch represents an interior of one of the batteries, in which are a party of rebel troops. The costume in which these mutineers fought was their usual native dress, upon which were buckled the British accoutrements. This dress consists of a closely-fitting linen jacket, open at the side of the breast, the Mussulman having the opening on the left, the Hindoo on the right. Round their loins a long strip of unbleached cloth, which is wound tightly round and the ends simply tucked in,—this *dhotey* was always worn by the Sepoy beneath his pantaloons, as was the white jacket beneath his regimental coat; on his head he wore a common white linen skull-cap, and occasionally a turban twisted loosely round his temples, with one end hanging down his back. Frequently, however, the regiments before Delhi turned out in their red coats, with the colours flying and the bands playing; on one occasion a regiment from the Bareilly brigade marched out, and the well-known music of "Cheer boys, cheer," was wafted by the breeze to the British camp. The Sepoys wear a necklace of white beads, which on the native officers are of gold. In the Sketch, the stout mutineer reposing on his cot is a subadar, or native sergeant-major, as is also the one on the horse, which is caparisoned after the native fashion, and has its mane and legs stained a bright orange-colour.

The Sepoys that composed the Bengal army were a fine body of men; and it was with a view to secure the tallest and the finest-looking men, that one class—viz., those who came from Oude—were principally selected,—men of high caste, and exceedingly bigoted in their religious views, and which is assigned by many as the main cause of the mutiny having extended so rapidly, as the majority of the army was of one caste, and, it may be said, of one family. The men are tall, the average height being 5 feet 9 inches; and it was not unfrequent to see grenadier companies with not a man under 6 feet 1 inch. But though tall, and in many cases powerful, muscular men, yet in weight they are not to be compared with the European; and this may be specially noticed in the tread of a native and of a British regiment. The former pass by with a sort of shuffling pace, while the latter come by with a heavy solid tramp, that seems to shake the earth.

23.—PRIZE AGENTS EXTRACTING TREASURE.

The grand assault having terminated successfully, and the entire city of Delhi, after a week's hard street-fighting, being in the hands of the British, the more pleasing task of collecting the spoils was now commenced upon; and no easy work was it for the Prize Agents to secure for the army the spoils they so richly deserved; for never was more artfully brought into play the cunning and the skill with which the wealthy men had concealed their treasure. Shawls and such-like spoils were more readily obtained, but coin and jewellery, being more easy to hide, the brain had far more effect in discovering the mines of wealth than had the spade; for it was by judgement—that instigated the piercing into the most improbable places—that at last some key could be obtained to unravelling the mysteries of Oriental concealment. Added to this, the well-known Eastern accomplishment of lying was practised to an unlimited extent; but the revolver was soon found to be a means of eliciting truth and bags of rupees simultaneously. Treasure was often found in walls duly plastered over, in staircases, between the roof and the beams, and not unfrequently sunk some twenty feet down into the ground, in spots where it was the least expected.

The Sketch represents a scene that occurred. A report had reached the ear of one of the Prize Agents, who of course had offered a large per-centage to those who gave accurate information, that a certain wealthy man had concealed several lakhs of rupees in a certain house. Search was made, but unsuccessfully, the man swearing by everything in creation that he had not a fraction of a rupee concealed. Threats of the rope at last brought out the intelligence that he had some 50,000 rupees in a certain place, but that that was all his wealth. This was speedily extracted, and he was released, when tidings came again that he had not disgorged one quarter of his treasure: so again was he seized, and, with a revolver at his head, he accounted on the spot for another 50,000, which was as speedily extracted as the former; but the Prize Agent, convinced that he was still lying, and finding threats unavailing, resolved to establish a little more alarm, placed him as a target, and vowed he would let fly if the fellow did not at once acknowledge where he had concealed the remainder. Still trusting to lies, and little imagining the Prize Agent would keep his word, he again swore most resolutely that he had been disgorged of every pice, and that he really and positively had no more; upon which the Prize Agent, levelling his revolver, let fly, but purposely avoided hitting him, allowing the bullet to sing within a few inches of his ear. Seeing that the Agent was in earnest, down went the terrified native on his knees, and declared that he would point out where 100,000 rupees were, if his life only was spared. By such devices large sums were discovered; but probably one-twentieth of the actual wealth of Delhi was never obtained to reward the captors for the many weeks of privation, danger, and death that they were exposed to ere the city fell into their possession.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

19.—ADVANCE OF THE SIEGE TRAIN.

This Sketch represents the advance of the siege-train that was despatched to Delhi for the purpose of demolishing the fortifications, which, it was found, could not possibly be effected by means of the few heavy guns that originally accompanied the force on its first breaking ground before Delhi.

Anticipating but a trifling resistance, if any, on the part of the rebels, a very few guns were brought from Umballa: these, on the first outbreak of the mutiny, were in the magazine at the Fort of Phillour, under the charge of a Sepoy regiment; and it was feared that there would be difficulty in obtaining possession of them; but in consequence of a rapid night march of a wing of H.M.'s 8th Foot from the neighbouring station at Loodianah, the regiment was surprised, and the arsenal secured. An artillery officer was immediately despatched from Simla by the Commander-in-Chief to bring a third-class siege-train to Umballa, which was accordingly done, by dint of the greatest exertion, and was effected not one moment before it was necessary; as, immediately after the last gun had crossed the bridge of boats that spanned the then narrow stream of one of the Five Rivers, the water rose, in consequence of the melting of the snows in the Himalayahs, and carried away the bridge. These guns were drawn by bullocks, from eighteen to twenty-four being yoked to each piece.

When it was found that this small train was ineffective to demolish the enemy's works, and that the pieces suffered so much from the accurate practice of the rebel artillery, who dismounted several, even at a range of 1,700 yards, and that the guns were, moreover, injured by the incessant firing, a new siege-train was ordered to be sent from the arsenal of Ferozepore. This magazine being at a distance of nearly 200 miles from Delhi, created considerable delay in the taking of the city; for nothing could be done but for our troops to maintain themselves in their position until its arrival, which was not until the 7th of September; by which time the batteries had been duly prepared for their reception.

The guns of this train were drawn by elephants, as shown in the Drawing,—a single elephant attached to each: but at times, when the road was deep in sand, the assistance of a second elephant had to be brought into requisition: and, with a pad to protect his forehead, he would push the wheels, lowering himself on his knees, and showing wonderful sagacity in adopting the best mode of extricating the ponderous mass from its difficulties. The train consisted of nearly fifty pieces of heavy ordnance; and these, together with the innumerable carts of ammunition, extended over about seven miles of road, and were protected by British infantry, new Sikh levies, and some irregular cavalry.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

22.—MUTINOUS SEPOYS.

This Sketch represents an interior of one of the batteries, in which are a party of rebel troops. The costume in which these mutineers fought was their usual native dress, upon which were buckled the British accoutrements. This dress consists of a closely-fitting linen jacket, open at the side of the breast, the Mussulman having the opening on the left, the Hindoo on the right. Round their loins a long strip of unbleached cloth, which is wound tightly round and the ends simply tucked in.—this *dhotey* was always worn by the Sepoy beneath his pantaloons, as was the white jacket beneath his regimental coat; on his head he wore a common white linen skull-cap, and occasionally a turban twisted loosely round his temples, with one end hanging down his back. Frequently, however, the regiments before Delhi turned out in their red coats, with the colours flying and the bands playing; on one occasion a regiment from the Bareilly brigade marched out, and the well-known music of "Cheer boys, cheer," was wafted by the breeze to the British camp. The Sepoys wear a necklace of white beads, which on the native officers are of gold. In the Sketch, the stout mutineer reposing on his cot is a subadar, or native sergeant-major, as is also the one on the horse, which is caparisoned after the native fashion, and has its mane and legs stained a bright orange-colour.

The Sepoys that composed the Bengal army were a fine body of men; and it was with a view to secure the tallest and the finest-looking men, that one class—viz., those who came from Oude—were principally selected,—men of high caste, and exceedingly bigoted in their religious views, and which is assigned by many as the main cause of the mutiny having extended so rapidly, as the majority of the army was of one caste, and, it may be said, of one family. The men are tall, the average height being 5 feet 9 inches; and it was not unfrequent to see grenadier companies with not a man under 6 feet 1 inch. But though tall, and in many cases powerful, muscular men, yet in weight they are not to be compared with the European; and this may be specially noticed in the tread of a native and of a British regiment. The former pass by with a sort of shuffling pace, while the latter come by with a heavy solid tramp, that seems to shake the earth.

23.—PRIZE AGENTS EXTRACTING TREASURE.

The grand assault having terminated successfully, and the entire city of Delhi, after a week's hard street-fighting, being in the hands of the British, the more pleasing task of collecting the spoils was now commenced upon; and no easy work was it for the Prize Agents to secure for the army the spoils they so richly deserved; for never was more artfully brought into play the cunning and the skill with which the wealthy men had concealed their treasure. Shawls and such-like spoils were more readily obtained, but coin and jewellery, being more easy to hide, the brain had far more effect in discovering the mines of wealth than had the spade; for it was by judgement—that instigated the piercing into the most improbable places—that at last some key could be obtained to unravelling the mysteries of Oriental concealment. Added to this, the well-known Eastern accomplishment of lying was practised to an unlimited extent; but the revolver was soon found to be a means of eliciting truth and bags of rupees simultaneously. Treasure was often found in walls duly plastered over, in staircases, between the roof and the beams, and not unfrequently sunk some twenty feet down into the ground, in spots where it was the least expected.

The Sketch represents a scene that occurred. A report had reached the ear of one of the Prize Agents, who of course had offered a large per-centage to those who gave accurate information, that a certain wealthy man had concealed several lakhs of rupees in a certain house. Search was made, but unsuccessfully, the man swearing by everything in creation that he had not a fraction of a rupee concealed. Threats of the rope at last brought out the intelligence that he had some 50,000 rupees in a certain place, but that that was all his wealth. This was speedily extracted, and he was released, when tidings came again that he had not disgorged one quarter of his treasure; so again was he seized, and, with a revolver at his head, he accounted on the spot for another 50,000, which was as speedily extracted as the former; but the Prize Agent, convinced that he was still lying, and finding threats unavailing, resolved to establish a little more alarm, placed him as a target, and vowed he would let fly if the fellow did not at once acknowledge where he had concealed the remainder. Still trusting to lies, and little imagining the Prize Agent would keep his word, he again swore most resolutely that he had been disgorged of every pice, and that he really and positively had no more; upon which the Prize Agent, levelling his revolver, let fly, but purposely avoided hitting him, allowing the bullet to sing within a few inches of his ear. Seeing that the Agent was in earnest, down went the terrified native on his knees, and declared that he would point out where 100,000 rupees were, if his life only was spared. By such devices large sums were discovered; but probably one-twentieth of the actual wealth of Delhi was never obtained to reward the captors for the many weeks of privation, danger, and death that they were exposed to ere the city fell into their possession.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

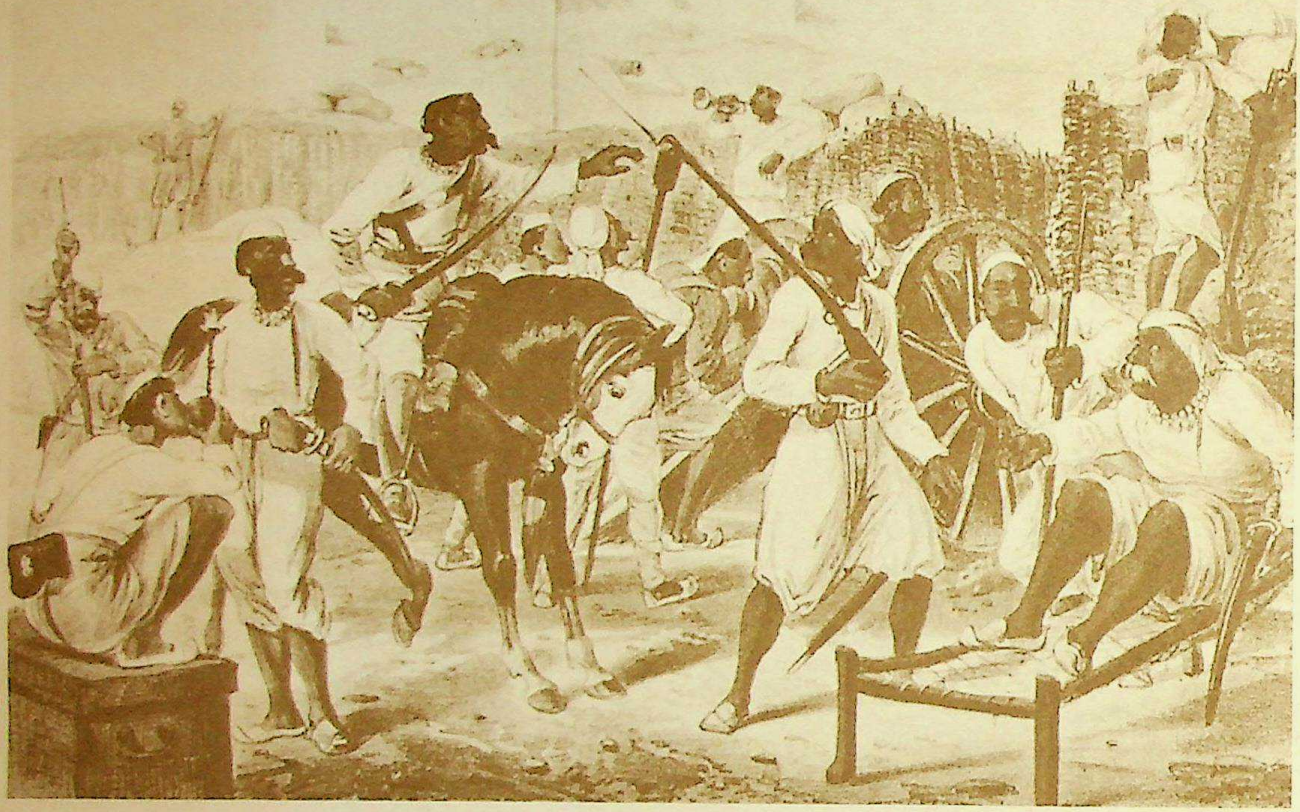


Plate 22

Plate 23

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN